



**STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES**  
*Aging and Disability Services Administration*  
*Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery*  
*PO Box 45330, Olympia, WA 98504-5330*

November 8, 2012

Dear Interested Parties:

The Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery, together with tribes and stakeholders have been working on drafting new rules that will establish administrative standards and support the program specific requirements for the licensing and certification of behavioral health agencies that provide chemical dependency, mental health, and problem and pathological gambling service. I am pleased to share with you a completed draft of these rules.

This draft represents countless hours of staff and stakeholder time. We could not have gotten to this point without the tremendous effort of all those that have been involved. These new rules will replace the current chapters or sections of WAC which regulate chemical dependency, outpatient mental health, and problem and pathological gambling programs. The intent of these changes is to:

- 1) Reduce administrative burden by:
  - a. Allowing those agencies that serve multiple populations to have:
    - i. A single set of administrative rules with which they must comply.
    - ii. A single set of administrative policies.
    - iii. A single clinical record for each client served.
  - b. Removing rules that are only applicable to specific payment sources.
  - c. Removing rules for which other entities are responsible for oversight, such as the Department of Health.
  - d. Creating a consistent language and structural platform for behavioral health services.
  - e. Allowing for the development of limited scope agencies.
  
- 2) Improve client care by:
  - a. Allowing agencies to serve a client using a single integrated treatment plan.
  - b. Updating standards for hiring staff who have unsupervised contact with children.
  - c. Requiring agencies to have an internal quality management process that addresses the clinical supervision and training of clinical staff.

Under this proposed construction, agencies providing chemical dependency, mental health and problem and pathological gambling services will be required to become licensed as a Behavioral Health Agency. The agency will then be able to choose which specific services they want to be certified to offer. An agency may choose to provide as many or as few services as they have the capacity to provide. For example, a Behavioral Health Agency may decide that they want to offer: all available services; a mix of chemical dependency, mental health, and problem and pathological gambling services; or a single service such as Chemical Dependency Assessments, Mental Health Wraparound Facilitation, or Problem Gambling Treatment. In any of these circumstances, the only rules that would apply are the behavioral health administrative rules and the program specific rules for the services the agency offers. Agencies will not be required to comply with rules that apply to services outside the scope of the agency.

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The proposed rules and information regarding the behavioral health services rule-making activities can be found on the DBHR Stakeholder Notices and Rule-Making Activities website at:

<http://dshs.wa.gov/dbhr/stakeholders.shtml#dbhr>.

**Please send any comments on the draft rules by 5:00 p.m., November 29, 2012 to:**

[DBHRRulesManager@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:DBHRRulesManager@dshs.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria Roberts", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Victoria Roberts, Office Chief  
Certification, Licensing and Customer Relations